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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, June 6, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "SOMETHING ABOUT SALAD." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

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One good habit we Americans have is the salad habit. With many of us, it's a year-round habit. And we can thank modern rapid transportation and refrigeration that we've been able to acquire this habit, that we can buy greens and other salad makings nowadays even in the dead of winter.

But just the same, summer is still the big salad time -- the time when we can indulge our good habit to the limit, the time to have the finest salads in great variety and have them twice a day if we want to. Salads may be expensive in winter, but in summer most of their ingredients are plentiful and cheap and many people have their own gardens to provide them. Nice as it is that we modern housekeepers can have food brought to us from far corners of the country, still, the truth is that vegetables right out of the garden have a flavor nothing can beat. And we can have this flavor in our salads at lowest cost in summer.

Temperature is another reason why summer is salad time. When the mercury climbs, we want foods that are cold, crisp and refreshing. A beautiful dish of chilled garden foods can do more to wake up appetites wilted by heat than all the tonics in the world. And at this time of year, a cold main dish is often more appetizing than the hot roast or stew that we enjoyed in winter. So now is the time to serve your family some salad meals. For your own convenience, make up a list of menus founded on salads that you can turn to on the hottest days

Like any other good meal, a salad meal needs to be balanced, needs the usual combination of protein, fat, carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins. The salads you choose for the chief dish at a meal will be one of the so-called "heartysalads." These are combinations of some protein food like cold diced meat or flaked fish or eggs or cheese with vegetables. You can make a very handsome salad plate with such a combination as well as a very satisfying one. Some of the most attractive of these main-dish salads are molded in gelatin. If your jelly mold is idling its time away on the top shelf, now is the season to get it out and let it help you cater to family appetites this hot weather. For gelatine dishes have a cold look and a cold taste that makes them very popular in warm weather.

I have a friend who often makes what she calls "jellied circle salads" in summer. She uses her ring mold to make the circle of jelly. And then she fills the space in the center with a salad mixture that balances the combination. For example, she often makes a tomato aspic ring and fills the center with chicken or tuna fish salad, combined perhaps with chopped celery or chopped green pepper and mayonnaise. Lettuce around the edge, of course. That's as pretty a salad dish as you ever set your eyes on and, as you see, is practically a meal in itself, a one-dish meal.





Sometimes my friend molds several chopped vegetables in a lemon aspic -- cooked green peas, perhaps, and chopped carrot and celery. Then she piles flaked canned salmon dressed with mayonnaise in the center. That's another good-looking combination.

Jellied molds of fish or chicken or diced cooked meat and vegetables also appeal to appetites in hot weather. You can make a jellied salad like this in an ordinary mixing bowl, if you haven't a mold. Of you can make it loaf-shaped by using a bread pan.

So much for the jellied main-dish combinations. Now about the stuffed vegetable combinations. Tomatoes and green peppers and small cucumbers are all good vegetables for stuffing. You can fill tomato cups with any one of a score of salad mixtures -- cottage cheese, or chopped meat or fish, or chopped hard-cooked eggs, and so on. Small green peppers cut lengthwise also make attractive cups to fill with salad and set on lettuce. But one of the prettiest stuffed salads is salmon salad in cucumber boats. You choose small cucumbers, wash but don't peel them, and cut them in half lengthwise. Then scoop out the inside. Combine the cucumber pulp with flaked salmon and dress with a tart sour-cream dressing. Pile this salmon-and-cucumber mixture into the green cucumber boats and serve on crisp lettuce. See what a nice color contrast -- green, white and the pink of the salmon?

Finally, your salad meal might be one of the little-of-everything combinations. A big platter of deviled eggs, cottage-cheese balls, sliced tomatoes or cucumbers, shredded raw carrots or cabbage or green pepper, sliced radishes -- all these served on a bed of crisp lettuce. Either mayonnaise or French dressing or sour-cream dressing will do for a salad like this.

I could go on mentioning these salad meal possibilities by the hour. But once you start, you'll discover plenty of good ones of your own. Use the garden foods as they come in season for your salads. And combine with them such inexpensive foods as cottage cheese and peanuts, canned fish, left-over cooked meat and eggs. The gelatin molds we spoke about are good ways to use up small amounts of left-over cooked meat or fish or left-over cooked vegetables.

Some of the least expensive foods and combinations make the best salads. It's the way you serve the salad and the way you season it that counts in its success. Be sure it's dainty and attractive to look at. Be sure it's thoroughly chilled -- and that includes the dressing and the plate you serve it on. Be sure it's thoroughly seasoned. Cold dishes need more seasoning than hot ones. Salads need to be tart enough and salt enough. And be sure the fresh raw vegetables are all crisp. Any moist foods need careful draining to avoid a watery salad. And remember -- a successful salad plate appeals to the eye first and then makes good its promise by appealing to the taste.

I have here for you a complete menu for a salad dinner, just as a suggestion. The menu: A platter of flaked tuna fish, chopped cabbage and pickle salad, dressed with mayonnaise. You can serve this alone or surrounded with a ring of tomato jelly. Then crisp potato chips and hot rolls. For dessert, fruit short-cake and coffee.

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